

September 1, 2006



## **Evanston Community Council**

P.O. Box 12128  
Cincinnati, OH  
45207

July 24, 2006

Margaret Wuerstle, Chief Planner  
Community Development and Planning  
805 Central Avenue, Suite 700  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Dear Ms. Wuerstle:

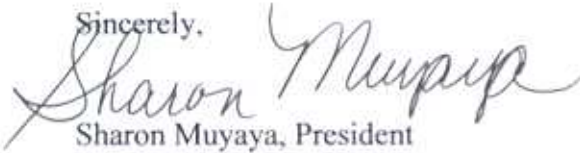
The City of Cincinnati, Department of City Planning prepared the Evanston – Five Point Urban Renewal Plan for the Evanston Community Council. A major part of the Plan recommends 1) a reduction in the size of the core business district, restricting it to the area north of the Five Point convergence, and 2) a rezoning of the area south of the Five Point convergence from business to multi-family residential. These recommendations were not implemented at the time because the Community Council was told that nothing could be done until the new City Zoning Code had been adopted. Now that the new Code has been adopted, the Community Council requests that the Planning Commission instruct staff to perform a zoning study on the property within the Evanston – Five Point Urban Renewal Plan to ensure that the zoning is consistent with the Plan. Copies of these recommendations are attached.

The Evanston Community Council spent many hours finalizing these recommendations which were formally approved by Cincinnati City Council in 2003. Evanston is committed to the expedient implementation of the Plan. These zoning upgrades are critical to ensure that the \$2 million committed to the area by the city is well spent.

*"To be dedicated to the common good of all residents and to the development of the community through educational, charitable and religious purposes."*

Mr. Drew Asimus and Mr. Edwin Pfetzing will be glad to work with you or your staff on how these changes can be implemented as expeditiously as possible. Drew may be contacted at 731-0088 and Ed may be contacted at 221-2645. I may be contacted at 200-3805.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharon Muyaya". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name "Sharon" and last name "Muyaya" clearly distinguishable.

Sharon Muyaya, President  
Evanston Community Council

Cc: Drew Asimus  
Edwin Pfetzing  
Michael Cervay

# EVANSTON – FIVE POINT URBAN RENEWAL PLAN



Prepared by the Department of City Planning

Prepared for the Evanston Community

Funding Provided by the Cincinnati Neighborhood Business District's United  
Program of the Department of Community Development

## Contributing Departments

Department of Community Development  
Department of Transportation and Engineering (*Division of Transportation Planning and Urban Design*)  
Cincinnati Recreation Commission  
Cincinnati Police Department



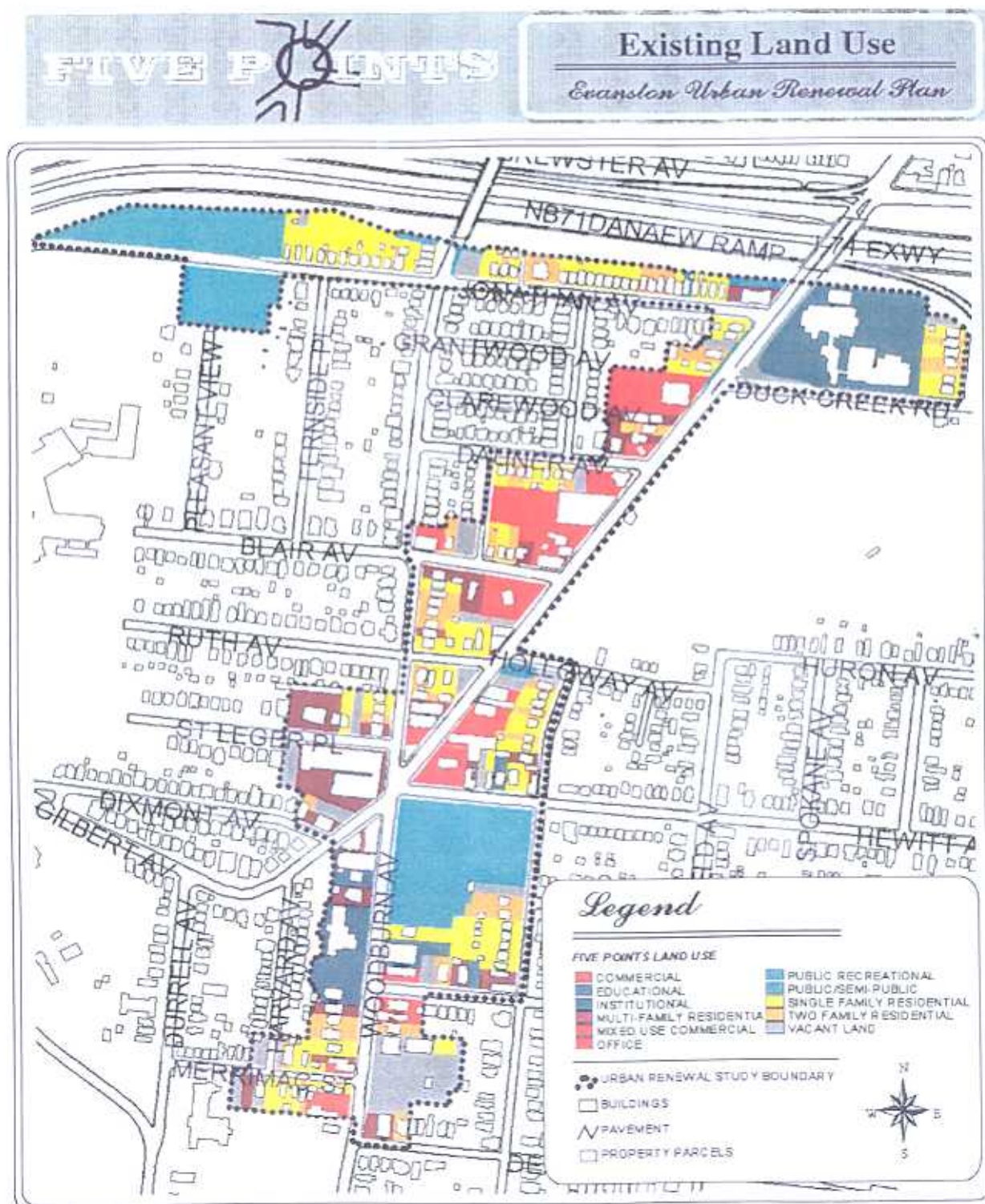


Figure 11



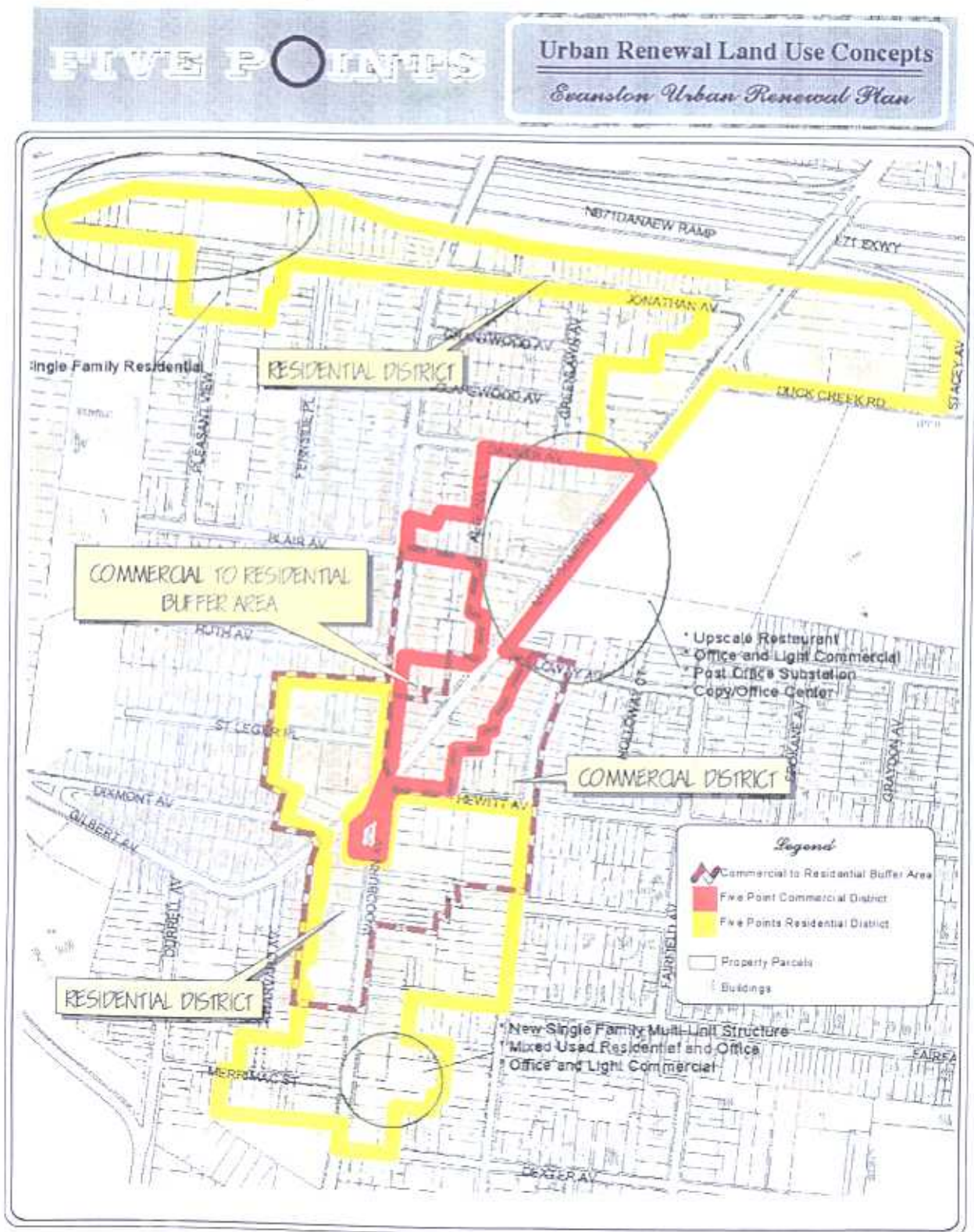


Figure 11



The plan recommends a mixed commercial/residential land use throughout the core area of the Five Point NBD. The plan's redevelopment concept responds to the demographic and land use changes that have been suggested by the key stakeholders who participated in the planning process.

### Key Recommendations

The key recommendations in this plan support the overall goal and objective of commercial and residential redevelopment in the Five Point area (see figure 9). They include the following:

#### Core Business Area

- Reduce the size of the core business district to include the area north of the Five Point convergence.
- Rezone the area south of the Five Point convergence from business to multi-family residential.
- Encourage reuse of the vacant school bus lot on Montgomery Road between Blair Street and Dauner Street as new mixed-use commercial and multi-family residential.
- Rehabilitate building façades in the core business district along Montgomery Road south of Dauner Avenue to Blair Street and along Woodburn Avenue just south of the Five Point intersection.

#### Residential Redevelopment

- Build new single-family, owner-occupied units on the 3.1-acre vacant Parks Department property on Jonathan Street near Walnut Hills High School.
- Support the redevelopment of the vacant 2.5-acre Laidlaw Bus Company property on Woodburn Avenue for a new medium density housing development.
- Construct a mixed-use commercial/residential development south of Ruth Avenue near the Five Points intersection, between Montgomery Road and Woodburn Avenue.

### Redevelopment Concept Description

The goal of the Evanston Five Point Urban Renewal Plan is to redefine the business district into a smaller core area. The core business area will concentrate business redevelopment between Dauner Avenue and

the Five Point intersections (see figure 12). Businesses should be located on the properties fronting Montgomery Road or on a connecting street for visibility and access. Those businesses that abut residential property should provide landscaped buffers at the rear and side yards to screen residences from business operations. The existing zoning supports the commercial use in this area.

Business development in the Five Point area has occurred without the benefit of a plan. The result is scattered site business locations in areas where zoning and available property is accepting of the business type. The low cost of land and building was the primary reason stated by business owners choosing to locate in the Five Point NBD. Businesses did not conduct market studies, which may have indicated that other locations outside the area would provide a better customer base. The resulting areas are left with vacant and under used properties. Many NBDs are experiencing similar situations and find it necessary to redefine the area of the district to capture the most profitable businesses.

There are 36 different business types in the Five Point NBD. Presently they are spread throughout the district. These businesses would benefit from a smaller concentrated business area that could combine customer volumes and provide convenient access (see figure 13). This would also be true for new businesses relocating in the NBD. The focus of this plan is to strengthening the core area. Additionally, the plan focuses on the short-range goal of relocating businesses that are not compatible with residential uses into a smaller centralized core NBD and limiting new business development in non-business areas such as the residential district on Woodburn Avenue.

The following strategy listing recommends the changes needed to restore the community. Photos and drawings are provided to illustrate the existing and proposed conditions.



### Issues

This plan focuses on the issues identified by Evanston residents, businesses and other key stakeholders as the primary cause of the deterioration of the Five Point Neighborhood Business District. The issues were identified through several planning forums conducted from April through August 2001. Citizens were also invited by mail to participate in the discussions.

Planning process updates and meeting notices were printed in the Evanston Community Newsletter. Most meetings were held at the Evanston Recreation Center and included 15 to 30 residents and stakeholders at each session. The major concerns expressed by the community are outlined below.

#### A Decentralized NBD

The citizens are concerned that the Five Point business district is too large and should be reduced in size to include the area north of the Five Point convergence. They feel the area south of the Five Point along Woodburn Avenue is developing as a residential mixed-use area with a few residentially oriented businesses. They would like to exclude this area from the core business district. The existing heavy business zoning along Woodburn Avenue in this area that does not reflect and support the residential redevelopment trend that is taking place in the area.

#### Lack of New Housing

Citizens also are concerned that a lack of new single-family housing in Evanston creates a disincentive for new families to relocate to Evanston. The development of new single-family housing in the Five Point area would attract new families to support a revitalized NBD.

New housing for elderly citizens is also a concern. The citizens wish to provide housing alternatives in the area for Evanston's growing elderly population.

#### Blight and Deterioration

The business district area is deteriorating and becoming susceptible to street crimes. Many of the Five Point business properties are neglected and not properly maintained or have become under used or vacant. These conditions promote loitering, drug trafficking and create a perception of the area as unsafe for residents and visitors.

### Strengths and Opportunities

The overall goal of this urban renewal plan is to capitalize on the opportunities present in the Five Point area. These opportunities are created by the growth and expansion of Xavier University, the development of the new retail center at Dana Avenue and Montgomery Road and two new commercial mixed-used developments planned for Evanston on Dana Avenue near Interstate 71, and in East Walnut Hills at Madison Road and Woodburn Avenue.

The plan tries to identify ways that the Five Point area can capitalize on the positive improvements happening in the area.

#### Xavier University Expansion

The Evanston community boundary abuts the Xavier campus north of Dana Avenue. Xavier is a nationally ranked university for academics and sports, ranked third among all Midwest Colleges by "U.S. News and World Report". The campus is growing, but physical expansion was until recently limited by the availability of land.

In 1978 the U.S. Shoe Corporation, donated 18 acres of land abutting the Xavier campus. This facilitated the needed physical expansion of the campus. The most notable addition being the "Cintas Center" a multi-use facility housing offices, a formal dining hall and major basketball arena that is the home of the nationally ranked Xavier men and women's basketball teams. The larger campus also supports the increase in new students enrollments.

Increased student enrollment at Xavier creates a greater need for housing and services to students and their families. Xavier has adopted the Evanston business community as its partner to provide many of these services. Together they cooperate to conduct student sponsored community service projects to assist the elderly and under privileged families in Evanston. The partnership offers growth opportunities for the Evanston businesses and may attract new businesses to the nearby Five Point NBD.

#### Commercial Redevelopment

Commercial redevelopment influenced by the 1998 Urban Renewal Plan began in Evanston in 2001. A new retail center is planned on the vacant site at the corner of Dana Avenue and Montgomery Road a few



### Public Transit

Many residents use the Metro bus system to reach the areas outside Evanston. Metro routes with various destination end points serve the community. Residents who rely heavily on public transit have stated that the bus routes are not convenient or suited to their needs. Their issue is the lack of cross-town routes and the routes of the buses. Transfer points are too far apart and riders must walk long distances to reach the desired bus stop. This extreme walking distance can be exhausting for older and younger residents. Most of the bus routes travel through the Five Point area, but riders must cross through heavy traffic to change buses.

### Existing Land Use and Zoning

The existing zoning in the study area south of the Five Point reflects a period during the 1960's before the development of I-71. Zoning in this area is a mix of medium to high-density business districts with B-2, B-3 and B-4 areas with multi-family residential area (see figure 10). This business zoning abuts low to medium density residential areas allowing auto-oriented businesses next to single-family homes.

The south area of the existing NBD has not developed as a business area, but has become a stable residential area with a mix of single family and multi-family properties. There are numerous redevelopment opportunities present in the area. The site with the most potential is a vacated school bus parking terminal. This site is mostly vacant and totals 2.5-acre. The site must be studied for environmental contamination and has two existing structures.

The area has experienced recent residential redevelopment, despite the long-standing business zoning. The community recommends a rezoning in the southern area from business to mixed-use commercial and residential zoning. This would encourage renovation of existing mixed-use structures and promote family oriented businesses. Businesses that are compatible to residential lifestyles such child daycare, food markets and offices would be allowed in this area.

The business area north of the Five Point is zoned medium and high-density business B-4 and is recommended to remain. It is the core area for new business development as suggested by this plan. The area contains a mix of uses including several auto-repair businesses, bar, funeral home, labor union

headquarters and a school bus business that was once located south of the Five Points.

The land uses in the north area of the NBD conform to the zoning code. The rear yard area of the businesses in this area abuts the rear yards of residential properties. Most businesses provide fencing with heavy tree growth as screening to separate the land uses. Some businesses however are not fenced or properly screened to contained undesirable noises, smells and trash attributed to their business operations. This occurs at the auto repair business at the northwest corner of Dauner Street and Montgomery Road and at the bus terminal between Blair Street and Dauner Street (see figure 11).

Proper buffering with landscaping side and rear yards should separate uses and screen businesses from residences. No rezoning is recommended for the area and any new businesses development or relocation would conform to the existing zoning.